

MARKETING AND FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY STUDIES WITH MANUFACTURING SOLUTIONS SETS ACE GLASS ON A GROWTH JOURNEY

ABOUT ACE GLASS . Established in 1986 in Little Rock, Arkansas, ACE Glass remains family owned and operated. The company's 32,000-square-foot facility is predominantly fabrication and warehouse space. The company fabricates custom shower doors, glass, handrail systems, aluminum composite panels, both aluminum and steel sheet brake metal, storefronts, skylights, curtain wall systems, and more. The Northwest Arkansas facility in Lowell is 17,000-square-feet of office, fabrication area, and warehouse space. Employees have networked computers with individual-station Internet accessibility. ACE owns many forms of fabrication and installation machinery and communication equipment that enhance the company's progressive and aggressive pursuit of the most 'challenging' projects and schedules.

THE CHALLENGE. ACE Glass was interested in entering the glass recycling market. There are several out-of-state firms currently offering destinations for glass to be recycled. The company was looking for a way to keep the revenue and jobs in Arkansas. As a result, the company was having to deal with a couple of different situations. First, ACE wanted to ensure the company's leadership understood the operating capital, marketing investment, training costs, and other up-front and ongoing expenses required to support the potential revenue of this initiative. Second, significant investment of capital and other company resources was required to enter this market. ACE wanted to make the most effective and efficient use of resources by targeting the marketing efforts in a very focused way.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions, part of the MEP National Network™, offered two different solutions to address the issues ACE Glass faced in its consideration of a glass recycling initiative in Arkansas. First, Manufacturing Solutions helped ACE complete a Technology Transfer Assistance Grant (TTAG) for Financial Feasibility Analysis. The financial model for a recycling facility/network in Arkansas would include capital, revenues, expenses, financing options, and more. Dexter Corporation, a leading provider of program management for records, document, quality assurance, and industrial facilities management, worked with ACE to develop the model.

To address the second situation, ACE applied for another TTAG for Marketing Feasibility Study for the glass recycling market in Arkansas. Manufacturing Solutions helped ACE explore the characteristics of the market using publicly available information as well as targeted collection of industry insider information through interviews in order to develop and validate a marketing plan for initial market entry. Dexter and Ace will work together to assess the available data, analyze the industry, and create a brief marketing plan. ACE is prepared to devote significant resources to market entry should the initiative prove feasible.

"We're very happy with the services provided. The training has been valuable for us."

-Courtney Little, Owner

RESULTS



\$3.91 million in new investment



\$1.5 million in increased and/or retained sales



\$200,000 in cost savings



12 new or retained jobs

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